

**Beyond Race and Gender:
Motivating Enlisted Personnel to Remain in Today's Military**

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Abstract

This paper provides a theoretical explanation for factors that have been found to influence the intentions of junior enlisted personnel to remain in today's military. Data from the Armed Forces 1996 Equal Opportunity Survey reveal that both the *pay and benefits* and *pride in service* variables have stronger effects on the propensity of junior-enlisted personnel to remain in the military than do the *race, gender, or racial climate variables*. Still, *satisfaction with pay and benefits* has a significant positive effect on the likelihood that respondents will stay in the military; *pride in service* is more robust.

This finding has policy implications for the recruitment and retention of today's military personnel. The neoclassical, economic paradigm that has formed the basis of the Services' recruitment and retention policies since the advent of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) is deficient in addressing the intangible needs of military personnel. A central theme of this study is that the military institution must change its paradigm if it is to adequately address current problems of recruitment and retention. As illustrated in this paper, Etzioni's socioeconomic paradigm provides a plausible alternative to the laissez-faire, neoclassical model currently employed by the U.S. Department of Defense. The socioeconomic model, unlike the neoclassical model, assumes that people make decisions not only out of self-interest, but also because they are part of a larger community. I propose that a socioeconomic paradigm allow for the military to develop policies that address non-economic as well as economic factors that influence men and women to remain in the military.

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